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How Has AI Changed Your Life?

By Stephen D. Ambrosini, CLU ChFC

20/20 Financial Advisers of Cardiff by the Sea

LLCsambrosini (at) 2020fa.com

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When I find myself at social events, I like to ask a question to start a conversation with those around me. The question is: “ Tell me how Artificial Intelligence (AI) has changed your life. What are your experiences?” Then I sit back and listen.

I started asking this question after attending a few seminars and reading books about the topic. Everyone has a story. Recently I asked my dental hygienist that question. She immediately became very tense and anxious. She denied it was affecting her at first, but after a few moments, she proceeded to tell me about a few new devices that will clean your teeth. They’re available on Amazon of course and are Bluetooth compatible. You charge this dental retainer type device, then you pop it in your mouth. Fifteen minutes later, your teeth are cleaned. That’s one less dental visit.

This week I asked a journeyman electrician how his life is changing. His answer: homes and offices being built today have less copper wire. It’s not needed anymore since everything is wireless. They still have to run some copper to the lights, but nowhere else. That’s a huge savings in new home construction. Also, the power companies are putting in controls that let them dim our lights when needed. So instead of black or brownouts, the power company can dim our lights from their location to save power.

From the books and articles I’ve read, I came across the name Jim Dator, an author and Professor at the University of Hawaii at Manoa. One of the Dator Laws is: “Any useful idea about the future should appear to be ridiculous.” Think about that for a moment. Things that we mocked, saw on TV, laughed at in movies are now modern-day. Star Trek communicators, Dick Tracy watches, “Back to the Future” hoverboards, “Beam me up, Scotty”, it’s here. They seemed ridiculous at the time, yet they are as real as the Apple Watch you’re wearing.

If it’s scary, and it is, it’s because change is hard. It’s rarely accepted or appreciated. We’re all stuck in our ways and want to leave it like that. However, we must accept the change because it’s happening whether we want it or not. The banks didn’t ask us if we want to now withdraw money from a machine and replace the friendly teller. They just did it, and we adjusted. As a result, many of us haven’t been inside a bank for years. This week I needed to refer a friend to a personal banker. I couldn’t, I don’t have one. Those days of walking in, saying hi, asking about the kids and work, are gone. AI has taken that away. And you know, that’s okay. We all have adjusted very well to that change.

So, let’s not be afraid of these changes. Let’s instead open up our eyes to see what’s coming. How can we benefit from them? How will it improve my life?

Example: the BMW dealership contacted me recently because my car sent them a message informing them that an oil change is overdue. Now I’ll be bringing the car in for service. That’s a good thing, it’s extending the life of the vehicle.